



Tailoring Pollution Prevention Education to Urban Landscapers in Madison, Wisconsin

The Situation

Nestled between two glacial lakes, Madison, Wisconsin is blessed with water resources. As in many urban watersheds, however, Madison has growing water pollution issues. One important pollution source is urban landscaping, in particular runoff from over-fertilization and pesticide misuse on lawns and in gardens.

Our Objectives

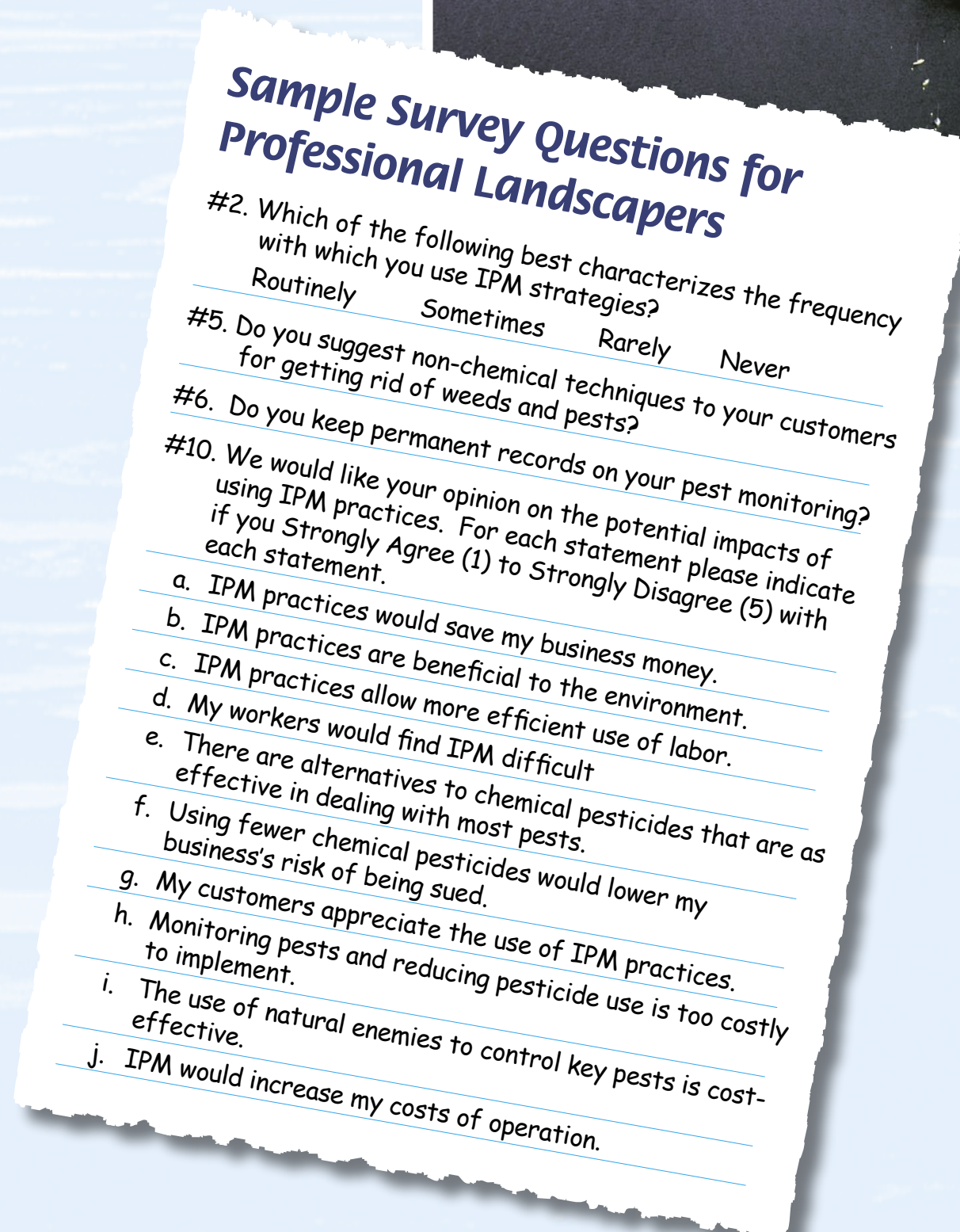
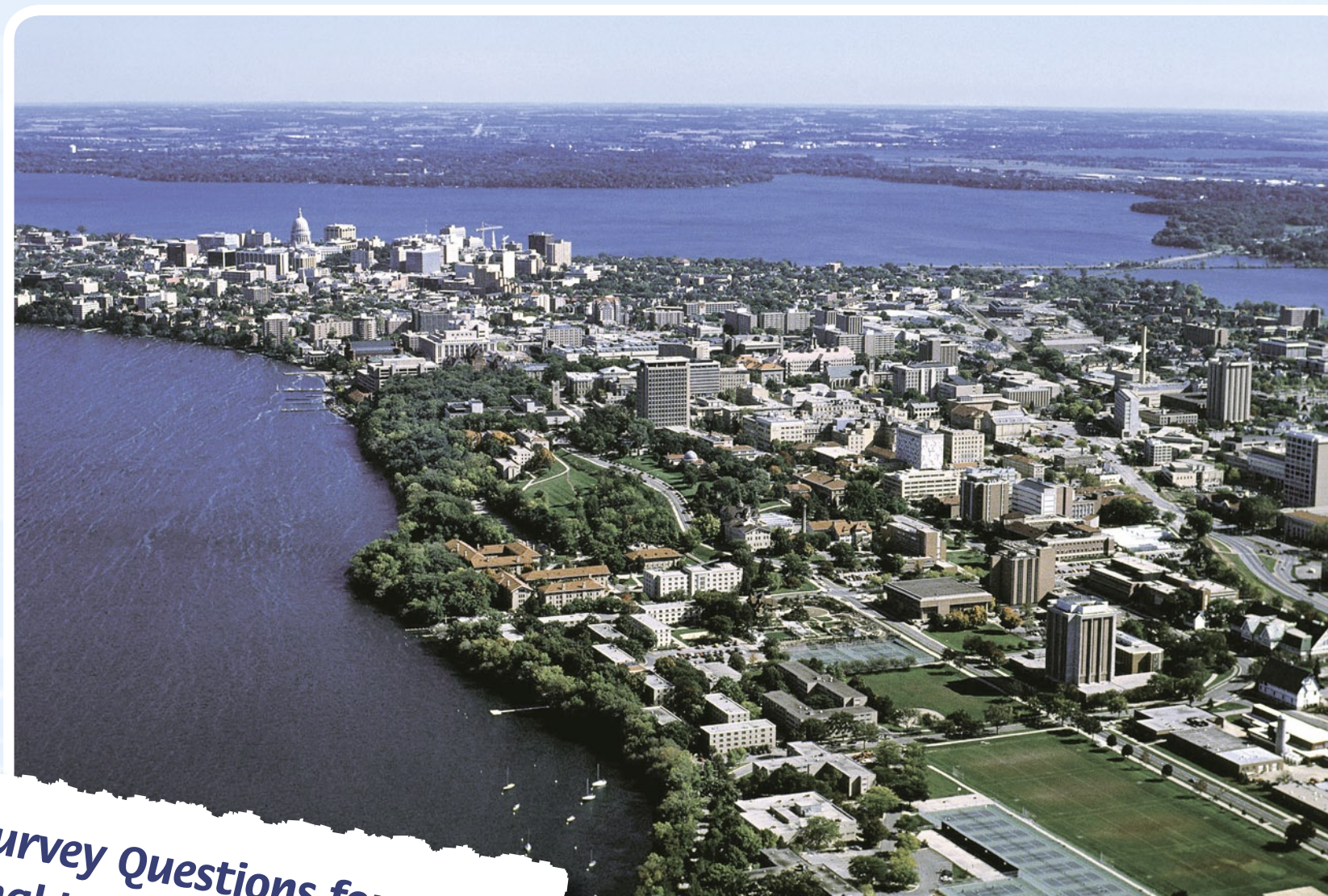
Supported by the US EPA Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program, this project is employing a social marketing approach to understand and redesign educational outreach strategies that promote pollution prevention behaviors among urban landscapers.

Our goal is to identify the barriers and benefits to the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) perceived by paid landscape managers in the Lake Monona watershed in the City of Madison and Dane County, Wisconsin. We will use this information in our partnerships with other watershed education and pollution prevention groups and with public agencies to design more effective outreach approaches.

Project Methods

- ✓ Telephone survey of urban landscapers in the Lake Monona watershed to learn more about what land managers know about IPM, what their sources of information are, and how they perceive benefits and barriers to the use of IPM.
- ✓ Contacting landscaper organizations and watershed partners to inform them of our project and involve them in setting goals.
- ✓ Collecting existing IPM materials and messages available to professional landscapers and urban residents, and evaluating them in light of survey results.
- ✓ Develop a social marketing strategy with principles and recommendations useful to urban watershed protectors nation-wide. It will include communications plans to use existing, revised or new landscaping IPM educational materials (such as a "Landscape-A-Syst" one-stop guide for landscape managers and a "Green Landscaper" certification program in Wisconsin) and a social strategy for instituting new behavioral norms of urban landscape management.
- ✓ Initiate a pilot implementation to test the strategy in collaboration with grassroots organizations, watershed educators, and public agency partners in the Lake Monona watershed, and widely publish and share the social marketing analysis and strategies with water pollution prevention educators.

According to the USGS urban watersheds may be more contaminated with pesticides than agricultural watersheds.



What is Social Marketing?

The "social marketing" approach goes beyond a one-way strategy of just informing people about issues. Social marketing begins with seeking to understand why people behave as they do and to identify what might support more sustainable behavior. It begins by assessing what people already know and believe, in order to remove barriers and provide appropriate tools to support new action.

A community based social marketing effort begins with setting clear objectives for a campaign and specifying a target audience. It includes building a relationship with the target audience and using surveys and focus groups in order to understand the behavior of that group. Once this groundwork is laid, social marketing efforts try to "open the door" for people to pursue more environmentally friendly behaviors such as composting, recycling and natural lawn care.

Elements of a social marketing campaign include:

- messages that give people the optimism that they can make a difference
- helping people develop skills
- eliciting comments
- establishing new norms
- providing ready reminders
- generating incentives
- removing barriers

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For More Information on Social Marketing

- ✓ *Fostering Sustainable Behavior*. An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing by Doug McKenzie-Mohr and William Smith. New Society Publishers 1999
- ✓ *Tools of Change* – a website sponsored by the Canadian National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, and offering many tools for social marketing strategies: <http://www.toolsofchange.com/>
- ✓ *Social Change Media* – an Australian website on social change, including "A 7 Step Social Marketing Approach": <http://media.socialchange.net.au/>
- ✓ "Making Health Communication Programs Work: A Planners Guide" -- a 131-page guide written by the US Department of Health and Human Services in 1992. A crash course in how to plan and execute a social marketing campaign: http://rex.nci.nih.gov/NCL_Pub_Interface/HCPW/HOME.HTM